Cable is a medium. It should be shared just like phone companies share phone lines. In fact phone lines and cable facilities should be a utility. Use of these facilites should be rented out. The Utility should not be aloud to provide services to the consumer. Utilities should be able to provide services to the company renting the facilities to be resold as supplemental services. The service provided on these lines should not be controlled other than for public safety reasons. If a company wants to use set top boxes, let them. Under this arrangement there no doubt will be competition that does not require set top boxes. Then it will be the consumer who decides.